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NEW MUSICAL PUBLICATIONS.

(From the "Ladies' Newspaper.")

CATEL'S TREATISE ON HARMONY: being No. V. of Novello's Library for the Diffusion of Musical Knowledge.

J. A. Novello, 69, Dean-street, Soho, and 24, Poultry.

The publication of this useful work in its present cheap form must be gratifying to all lovers of music, who desire to see the principles of that delightful art more generally diffused and better understood than they at present are. It is astonishing how greatly even a very slight knowledge of counterpoint prepares the ear for new sources of enjoy-

ment. That class of amateurs, to whom the Italians apply the designation of *orecchianti* (because they are alive only to the oral impressions produced by musical performance), would find their pleasure as listeners ten-fold increased by some acquaintance with the principles of harmony.

Catel's excellent "Treatise" is the more welcome in the neat and cheap form in which it now appears; it is published at 2s. 6d., whereas its former price was 15s. It may fairly be pronounced the clearest work extant for teaching the general rudiments of harmony. Its author was appointed Professor of Harmony at the Paris *Conservatoire de Musique*, on the first establishment of that Institution, and his attention, together with that of other distinguished professors, was directed to the necessity of fixing a basis of musical instruction, and compiling elementary works in all branches of the art. The task assigned to Catel, was to write a "Treatise on Harmony," and on this work his reputation chiefly rests, though he was also the author of several much-approved works on musical theory, as well as an admired composer. He moreover had a large share in the compilation of the "Solfeggi," in use at the *Conservatoire*.

The object of the "Treatise on Harmony," now before us, is to simplify, as much as possible, the elements of the science. The groundwork of Catel's system is, that all discords are formed from concords. He reduces chords to a very small number, by giving the name "chord" to those only which need no preparation, and which naturally exist in a sonorous body. Our author divides harmony into two classes—viz., simple, or natural, and compound, or artificial. Simple harmony, he defines as comprising all chords which demand no preparation. Compound harmony he regards as being founded on simple harmony; and formed by the suspension of one or more parts, which prolong one or more notes of a chord on the following chord.

"If, observes M. Catel, the common chord C E G be followed by the common chord F A C, the harmony is *simple*. If, on the second chord, the third of the first chord be prolonged, the prolongation will form a discord of the seventh on the common chord. If, on the second chord, the fifth of the first chord be prolonged, this prolongation will form a discord of the ninth on the common chord, and then the harmony is *compound*."

Thus he shows that every progression of simple harmony may become compound by prolongation, and every compound progression may become simple by suppressing prolongation. This method of making simple harmony the general foundation of every dissonant progression, has the advantage of enabling the learner to understand the nature of every chord, and, at the same time, to become acquainted with its use. The subject is treated throughout in a very masterly style, and great praise is due to Mrs. Cowden Clarke for her excellent translation of this very useful work. The Treatise concludes with "Observations on the Method of Figuring," containing clear and concise instructions for playing the harmonies of figured basses, which will be found very useful to accompanists in general.

The series of works now in course of publication, under the title of "Novello's Library for the Diffusion of Musical Knowledge," cannot be too highly recommended to the notice of all who are interested in the great question of public education. These works cannot fail to improve the understanding and the taste of all young persons in whose hands they may be placed. Their marvellous cheapness will, it may be hoped, secure for them a widely extended circulation, and the result of their general diffusion must inevitably tend to verify the words of Luther, aptly quoted by the editor:—"Music is a schoolmistress, that maketh people more gentle and meek-minded, more modest and understanding. . . . Youth ought to be brought up and accustomed to this art, for it maketh fine and expert people."